



Sustainable Monocacy Commission
Thursday, February 23, 2023 at 6:30 p.m.
Winchester Hall, 3rd Floor Meeting Room
12 East Church Street, Frederick, MD

MINUTES

Members present: Lonnie Ropp (Vice Chair), Andy Celmer, Chuck Eirkson, Gary Magnuson, Matt Moran, Council President Brad Young

Members present virtually: Kim Stewart

County Staff: Kimberly Gaines, Karin Flom

Guest Speakers: Mike Wilkins (Director, Development Review & Planning for Frederick County), Joe Adkins (Deputy Director for Planning for City of Frederick), Rick Albee (Supervisor of Hydrology/Hydraulics for City of Frederick)

The Sustainable Monocacy Commission's February 23, 2023 meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m.

Vice Chair Lonnie Ropp opened the meeting with a review of the January 26, 2023 meeting minutes. Lonnie requested the minutes reflect that her concern was with the draft 2022 Monocacy Report using the Hood College report as a reference, and it was the Hood College report that she felt improperly characterized agriculture. A typo was noted in the fourth paragraph. Chuck Eirkson requested the section about trash receptacles at the river access points note that the Frederick County Division of Parks and Recreation is responsible for some of these sites. With these corrections noted, Andy Celmer motioned to approve the January 26, 2023 meeting minutes as corrected; Chuck seconded. Unanimous approval.

The next agenda item was presentations from guest speakers from Frederick County and the City of Frederick. The topic was how these jurisdictions review environmental impacts and stormwater management for river-adjacent properties undergoing development.

Mike Wilkins, Director, Development Review & Planning for Frederick County discussed the County's floodplain district regulations. The floodplain district has three components: FEMA mapped floodplains, flooding soils, and wetlands. No development is permitted in the FEMA floodplain with limited exceptions (such as recreational equipment, open fences, open-sided buildings). The County also has stream buffer setbacks and water body buffer requirements, but these only apply to the land subdivision process. The required setback varies based on the percent of steep slopes. Sometimes there may be overlap between features that have water body buffer requirements and the floodplain district requirements, but the County's rules allow for the buffer to be expanded to the greater number.

Joe Adkins, Deputy Director for Planning and Rick Albee, Supervisor of Hydrology/Hydraulics spoke about the City of Frederick's regulations. Joe began by discussing some of the recent work by Jenny

Willoughby in the Sustainability Department on stream restorations and water quality improvements. He also spoke about the change in approaches to stormwater management. The focus in stormwater has shifted from regional ponds to smaller ponds to collect and treat stormwater on-site. There are also more afforestation requirements.

Rick Albee mentioned that the City of Frederick is a Class 6 community under the Community Rating System. The benefit to the community is that property owners have a 20% discount on NFIP insurance if they are within the floodplain, and a 10% discount if they are outside the floodplain. The City recently updated its floodplain ordinance in advance of the new FEMA flood maps being released. The City's floodplain regulations include setbacks from watercourses which range from 50 to 100 feet. He also discussed stormwater management. Any project disturbing over 5,000 square feet and any impervious surface requires stormwater management.

After the guest presentations, Lonnie opened a discussion of the updated 2022 Monocacy Report draft. There were concerns raised by Chuck about the content added to the report about the agricultural sector and the fact that it was not focused on the Monocacy River. Gary suggested the location of the new text did not align with the heading it was under. Matt suggested focusing the agriculture piece back on the Monocacy River and its watershed and partnerships. Lonnie volunteered to work with Chair Bill Allen on revising the agriculture section and reframing it to the other points made in the report. They will send an updated version to staff by March 9.

Kim Stewart discussed some initial ideas from the outreach subcommittee. A meeting of the full subcommittee did not happen before the February meeting, but she and Gary had discussed some initial ideas which focused on outreach to schools/young people, a photo contest (such as the Visit Frederick County page), and working with the stakeholders identified in the Hood College open house attendance list. Some items that came up in the discussion with the Commission included encouraging litter control near the Monocacy River be a higher priority to Frederick County and the City, installing no-dumping signage, creating YouTube videos through the County's Video Services (the new Monocacy Report was suggested as a topic), and joining existing clean up events of the Monocacy River. Gary also mentioned during this agenda item that the Potomac Watershed Report Card is expected to be released in June at the same time as the Chesapeake Bay report card.

In a discussion about installing trash receptacles at river access sites, Kimberly Gaines noted the email sent to the Commission on this topic following the January meeting. She suggested that members survey the access sites to identify those where there may be a need for new or additional receptacles. The Commission could then elect to make specific recommendations to the entity or entities responsible for the access site(s).

With no other business, the meeting adjourned at 8:15 p.m.